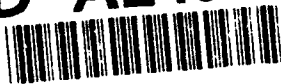


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NAVAL INTERDICTION

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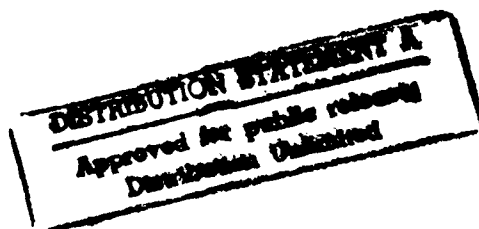
T.J. Howington  
Lieutenant Commander, USN

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Naval Operations.

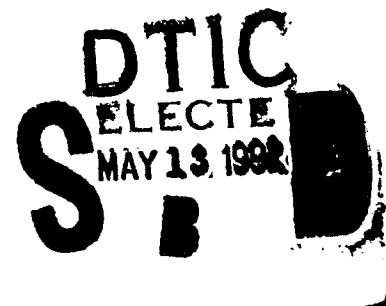
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Signature: T.J. Howington  
13 February 1992

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# Abstract of NAVAL INTERDICTION

Naval Interdiction is the employment of naval forces to interrupt, selectively or completely, the sea commerce of a given nation in order to coerce that nation to change its policy or course of action.<sup>1</sup> This paper will focus upon naval interdiction as a restricted but operationally viable course of action. The scope is limited to the operational commander (CINC, component commander, or JTF commander). Within this operational framework, the paper's purpose is to conduct a dynamic analysis of the factors an operational commander might encounter regarding his decision to interdict or to recommend interdiction. This paper contends that naval interdiction has limited but effective application, possesses valid political qualities and will increasingly be a diplomatic tool utilized by the United States.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

For what can war but endless war still breed?  
Milton, Sonnet on the Lord General Fairfax

The world abhors war. Nations righteously renounce armed conflict and governments tear themselves apart in its debate. War cuts short precious life, and the length of human life stands as the one factor of existence mankind cannot control, manufacture or preserve. Hence, the value of life rises from its limitations.

Perhaps, this ideal ultimately forms the basis for the reasons nations attempt to avoid war. The cynic may argue that war is inevitable and authorities avoid conflict only while it is advantageous to do so. Nevertheless, some synergistic process motivates civilized governments, both democratic and authoritarian, to search all available avenues of peace before committing to the path of war. One such avenue is the utilization of "limited naval force" (LNF).<sup>1</sup>

The subject of this paper concerns one form of LNF: interdiction and its impact upon the operational commander's decision-making. Interdiction represents an

aggressive last attempt, short of war, to influence an opposing government's policy and/or course of action.<sup>2</sup>

During the 20th century, the United States has utilized LNF more than any country in pursuit of its national objectives, and with U.S. economic preeminence eroding, the prospects are high that the United States will continue to rely on such tactics as an expedient peacetime weapon.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, Operational Commanders (OC) must be succinctly aware of their political decision-making environment as well as critical planning and execution factors of interdiction operations.

#### Definition of Terms

Before proceeding, it necessary to briefly address semantics. During the research for this paper, I have encountered terms such as quarantine, blockade, embargo, sanctions, boycott and many others regarding the subject, each with numerous explanations. Generally, each definition is used by international law scholars and politicians to define varying degrees of economic and military activity. For the sake of expediency and to provide consistent reference throughout this writing, I will utilize the phrase naval interdiction to describe the use of naval forces in the following manner: to

interrupt the export and/or import by sea of selected items from/to a given country. This action entails the query and if necessary, stopping, boarding and searching of a suspect commercial vessel on the high seas for the purpose of determining whether the ship is transporting contraband. Interdiction includes the seizure of commercial goods, personnel and/or ships. This type of force can be limited to one act or an ongoing operation, and is considered by the international community to be a "coercive act of diplomacy," which falls short of constituting war.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Brown-John proposes the phrase, "nondestructive coercion," although interdiction may include violence.<sup>6</sup> From the military point of view, however, these actions, regardless of semantics, will be defined by the target nation as an act of war.<sup>7</sup>

### Historical Background

To neglect the study of history is not prudent;  
If we are entrusted with the care of others it  
is not just.

Samuel Johnson

The fundamental reasons for naval interdiction and its methods of implementation have changed very little since its first recorded use in the 14th century.<sup>8</sup> Then and now, the decision to interdict the commerce of another

TABLE I

## Historical Uses of Naval Interdiction

YEAR	INCIDENT	SUMMARY
1936	Pre-Spanish Civil War	Warships from both sides interdict each others commerce; partially successful.
1947	Jewish Mass Immigration	Britain seize ships carrying Jews to Palestine; complete failure.
1949	American Interference	Chinese warships blockade China's coast and seize U.S. vessels; not successful.
1956	Algerian Insurgency	France seizes German arms ship bound for Algerian rebels; interdiction effort successful.
1966	U.N. Blockade of Rhodesia	British warships turn away oil tankers; successful.
1979	Fishing Zone Disagreement	American tuna boats are seized by Canadian warships; dispute ongoing.
1985	Achille Lauro HighJacking	U.S. carrier jets force down Egyptian plane carrying hijackers; successful.
1990	Iraq Invades Kuwait	U.S. interdicts all Iraqi commerce except humanitarian items; successful.

Source: James Cable, Gunboat Diplomacy 1919 (London: The Macmillan Press, LTD., 1981), pp. 195-258.



nation is an overt, political use of naval force to militarily broach a diplomatic stalemate. However, I do not mean to imply that a seapower can and will turn to naval interdiction in order to pressure any nation which sails the oceans' highways for the conduct of international trade.

This section's purpose is not to provide the reader a complete recounting of the historical uses of LNF nor to present specific future scenarios in which interdiction might be applied. Instead, I furnish in Table I a few past examples to better define the scope of 20th century interdiction operations and to provide a greater appreciation of the applicability and possible extent of interdiction.

#### Assumptions

We must always leave room for strokes of fortune,  
and accidents that cannot be foreseen.

Polybius, Histories, ii

The scope of this paper is limited and therefore can not go forward without constructing some key assumptions to frame the writing. The validity of these general assumptions ranges from near-facts to the ideas of published scholars to my best guesses, but, nonetheless,

represent poignant areas of debate. These assumptions are:

1. World disorder is increasing. The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact countries and the breakup of the former Soviet Union has withdrawn support for many oppressive regimes around the world and has given rise to the causes of civil strife, ethnic revolt, and nationalism. This will result in more limited conflicts on a regional basis and an increase in incidents where U.S. interests are affected or threatened.<sup>9</sup>

2. As the industrial economies of the world invest more in Third World countries and become more interdependent, there will exist a growing reluctance of members of the international community to resort to war in order to settle diplomatic disputes. This will lead to an increase in the utilization of naval interdiction by those nations which hold world-wide interests and possess such a naval capability.<sup>10</sup>

3. The sphere of influence of the Commonwealth of Independent States (formerly U.S.S.R.) has markedly decreased, thereby reducing the likelihood of conflicting interests between the CIS and United States. Therefore, for the foreseeable future, the CIS will not present a significant political or military challenge to limited U.S. military actions (assuming they do not directly endanger CIS vital interests) such as naval interdictions.<sup>11</sup>

4. As demonstrated in Desert Storm, limited military actions, short of war, carry greater strength if supported by an international organization (such as the United Nations) or a coalition of multiple nations. While this is highly desirable, self-interests, conflicting diplomatic efforts and economic dependencies will make multi-lateral support less likely in the future.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the United States should be prepared to unilaterally conduct limited military operations such as naval interdictions.

## CHAPTER II

### The Influence of Policy on the Mission

If a man does not know to what port he is steering,  
no wind is favorable.

Seneca

This portion of the paper addresses the Operational Commander's view. Within this writing, the title of Operational Commander (OC) refers to the individual with operational control of forces in a given situation. Depending on the scope and duration of the operation, the OC could be the CINC, Component Commander or JTF Commander.

Operational Commanders are no longer purely militaristic animals which operate in the vacuum of long distances and foreign countries. Their decisions and actions have great impact upon the forces of world politics and international law. This is especially true when undertaking limited military action in peacetime such as an interdiction operation. The tolerance for error is small and the diplomatic implications of military misjudgements can be incendiary and irreversible. In short, the OC oversees the political, social and economic employment of armed forces, and must ensure subordinates interpret his tasking, not only to complete the mission,

but within the continuity of achieving applicable elements of the President's Foreign Policy.

This brings us to the mission and its analysis. Interdiction is by its nature political, and its objective is peaceful policy change, not the destruction of an opposing army nor a transition in government.<sup>1</sup> This is a mission with which the OC will never be comfortable, having studied and prepared for war the whole of his/her military life. Wartime missions extend from much publicized and well rehearsed doctrines and military plans.<sup>2</sup> Political missions and objectives are often vague and hold more implied missions than those expressed. In war, the mission is paramount and its method of accomplishment is often secondary, but the impact of the procedure to achieve a peactime political mission can be more important than the mission. Diplomatic ramifications can obliterate the legitimate advantage gained by accomplishment of the mission.

In order to establish legitimacy within the boundaries of international law, all missions of interdiction actions must have peaceful resolution as their methodical aim. This type of force can "emanate...(from) the common consent of the international community" if it is accompanied by a "mandate."<sup>3</sup> Understanding this political mandate and communicating its influence upon the mission to his subordinates is the

critical task of the OC. Passing the influence of policy to the executors of the mission will assist in framing and focusing the mission's tasks and their implementation.

#### Applicability of Naval Interdiction

Do not endeavor to better our affairs by attempting things, which, for want of success, may make them worse.

George Washington

Although classified as a diplomatic tool, naval interdiction will not be the remedy of choice for every political obstruction. In fact, the situations in which interdiction may exist as a viable option are limited.<sup>4</sup> Sir James Cable holds a much broader view. He states that only two requirements must be met to interdict: "warships and the will to use them."<sup>5</sup> However, I see five questions of applicability which the OC should answer before recommending or instituting the option of naval interdiction:

1. Will interdiction accomplish the desired objective, i.e., will interdiction impose such hardship upon the target nation that it alters the decisive policy or action? Objectives such as the destruction or disarming of military forces or change of governments have little chance of attainment by interdiction.

2. What is the probable duration of this operation? The results of interdiction operations are difficult to measure and usually take years to manifest. Additionally, Americans have demonstrated a low propensity to accept long-term military operations.

3. What is the chance of escalation? The overriding purpose of interdiction is war avoidance. The likelihood of escalation increases with the diplomatic and/or military capability of the target nation. Successfully interdicting a highly industrialized, technically sophisticated nation is virtually impossible without war.

4. What is the prospect of allied assistance, multilateral coalition or U.N. advocacy? The answer to this question resides in a balance between participating in a multilateral interdiction effort and a nation's self-interest. As stated previously, construction of multilateral support for military actions will be increasingly more difficult.

5. What is the prospect that the target nation can sustain itself or obtain commercial and humanitarian assistance from allies or sympathizers which would mitigate the effects of interdiction?<sup>6</sup>

6. If the interdiction operation interrupts the export of a precious commodity, such as oil, does the interdictor and his allies have a secondary supplier?<sup>7</sup>

Thus, situations which would lend themselves to the use of naval interdiction should have these general characteristics:

1. The interdictor and target nation must have an ongoing diplomatic dialogue. The aim of interdiction is coercive diplomacy, not destruction or punishment.

2. The target nation must utilize the sea as the primary route of its main resource/commerce, must not be self-sufficient, and must not have a "blue water" (or similarly capable) navy.<sup>8</sup>

3. The interdiction action should create a fait accompli. This is not an absolute, but the risk of ineffectiveness or escalation increases with a nation's ability to counter interdiction.

4. All other suitable diplomatic remedies have been attempted and have failed, i.e., this is the last resort, short of war.<sup>9</sup>

From the above, one can deduce that interdiction is severely restricted in its applicability. This is the rule most often violated by those planning and constructing foreign policy. Interdiction too often presents an enticing alternative to diplomatic obstruction, and traditional seapowers have prematurely utilized their naval prowess without considering the balance of positive and negative factors.

## Measures of Effectiveness and Termination

Blockades in order to be binding must be effective.  
Declaration of Paris, 1856

Before delving into the arguments for and against interdiction, a brief examination of the concepts of measurement and termination may be meaningful. Measurement of progress toward an objective is intrinsic in the process of the military man's logic, and therefore is usually an integral part of the Operational Commander's plan. However, measures of effectiveness (MOE) for an interdiction operation are scarce and ambiguous.<sup>10</sup> Some suggested MOEs are: status of price indexes, activity in service trades, per capita productivity, and the ratio of agriculture to industry production.<sup>11</sup> A less measureable indicator is the political stability of the target government and its leaders.<sup>12</sup> Interdiction can also be measured by the number of ships intercepted, tons of cargo seized, or number of ships redirected, etc. But because the aim of interdiction is diplomatic resolution, perhaps a better MOE might be the amount and substance of diplomatic activity such as meetings, proposals, and concessions. Ultimately, the best MOE may be whether or not conflict is avoided.<sup>13</sup> Whichever MOEs are selected, progress will be slow and not easily measured.



Closely related to MOEs is the idea of termination. On its face, the ending of an operation should commence when the objective is attained. For interdiction, however, the cumulative effects, rather than the actual accomplishment of the stated objective, should be weighed when deciding when to terminate. Interdiction need not accomplish its initial objective to be successful. Numerous positive but unintended outcomes could occur and influence the decision to terminate. Likewise, the impact of interdiction acts as a cancer, creeping undiscovered until it eventually coerces the desired policy change or causes the downfall of the target government.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the point of success of an interdiction operation is unclearly defined, and the decision to terminate will be based more on judgement than facts. As an example, interdiction operations, as of this writing, continue against Iraq, some 18 months after initiation and almost 10 months after Iraq was forced out of Kuwait.

## The Argument for Interdiction

It (interdiction) touches every member of the hostile community.

Mahan: Some Neglected Aspects of War, 1907

There are nine major arguments which support the use of naval interdiction. The first and most important attribute is war avoidance. Interdiction is an act of peace and designed to be bloodless.<sup>15</sup> The legitimacy of interdiction is founded in the search for a peaceful resolution to a given problem, and if peace is the heart of interdiction, then diplomatic dialogue is its blood. Interdiction without ongoing talks is war.<sup>16</sup>

Another benefit of interdiction is strictly a practical consideration. Compared to the cost of war, interdiction, in the short-term, appears to be a diplomatic bargain. In some instances, the fiscal strain of preparing for and conducting war can preclude that course of action. Notwithstanding the financial hardships which can backlash upon the interdictor, the act of interdiction is vastly less expensive than war.

Within our system of government, interdiction provides the President with a foreign policy tool which he can utilize immediately to express disapproval toward the target nation.<sup>17</sup> This is a powerful weapon which can provide a tremendous psychological punch and interfere

with the target nation's "prosperity and population comfort."<sup>18</sup> In cases where a belligerent has bullied a smaller country, the President can act quickly to "deny (the target nation) an outright victory."<sup>19</sup> Such action gives substance and meaning to international law as well as expresses the moral basis and sense of justice for which a nation exists.<sup>20</sup> In scenarios which the United States has little hope of successfully influencing the target nation's policy, interdiction can act as a "symbolic vengeance."<sup>21</sup>

A fourth supporting reason rests upon capability. The U.S. Navy can do it! The United States is one of only a few countries which possess the power to conduct an effective interdiction operation anywhere in the world, and more importantly, we have the naval power to present a fait accompli to most Third World and underdeveloped nations. Possessing this power to possibly avoid war and not utilizing it where applicable would be internationally irresponsible.

Fifth, interdiction, especially if initiated quickly in response to a transgression, would act as a powerful deterrent to future aggressors. U.S. actions would ensure that international miscalculation did not go without punishment,<sup>22</sup> and also create a long-term "watchdog effect"<sup>23</sup> by the international community. In view of the

CIS dilemma, this course of action is likely to be very influential against former communist satellites.<sup>24</sup>

Interdiction also satisfies the "emotional needs"<sup>25</sup> of the U.S. public. This is very important within a democracy, in which the people have a monumental influence upon those in power. The rationality of interdiction plays well in Peoria. Upon the breakdown of diplomacy, Americans view interdiction as the next logical step in foreign policy, and therefore, interdiction enjoys a type of logical sensibility in the avoidance of war.<sup>26</sup> Interdiction can also redirect the public's attention from domestic problems, which serves well the politician who is worried about the loyalty of his constituents.<sup>27</sup>

Seventh, an interdiction operation can provide a concrete action upon which to build and maintain a coalition against the target nation.<sup>28</sup> The world community generally understands that interdiction avoids war (or delays it), and therefore, sees interdiction as a positive action as compared to conflict.<sup>29</sup> Expressed in another way, interdiction falls within "internationally acceptable codes of conduct."<sup>30</sup> From the U.S. perspective, interdiction might enhance the American image and reputation. Acting as part of a collective security group, the United States could use interdiction to reinforce its position as world leader and reassure doubtful nations that the United States will not act as a

bully with its seapower.<sup>31</sup> Additionally, Dr. Margaret Doxey states that if the coalition can be preserved, the psychological effects of interdiction will be significantly greater.<sup>32</sup>

An eighth major purpose for interdiction is to supplement other forms of coercive diplomacy. Although diplomatically valuable, economic measures such as boycotts, embargoes and sanctions are rarely successful when applied singularly.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, another consideration in favor of naval interdiction is the ease by which a nation may withdraw its forces and disengage from the operation. Unlike an engaged army or siege force, naval interdiction takes place on the high seas. Interdicting forces do not cross into the territorial waters or violate the sovereignty of the target nation. Notwithstanding the diplomatic ramifications of withdrawal, naval interdiction forces inherently possess the ability to terminate their orders and return home.

#### The Argument against Interdiction

An inadequate commercial blockade and war on seaborne trade are the most hopeless forms of hostility.

Corbett, *The Successors of Drake*, 1900

While the argument for interdiction is strong, the OC cannot recommend interdiction as a viable option without considering the negative and conducting a dynamic analysis. This section covers the argument against interdiction and an analysis is conducted in the next section of the paper.

The first of numerous factors against the employment of interdiction is escalation. The actions required for interdiction closely resemble those of a blockade, which is traditionally an act of war.<sup>34</sup> Regardless of propriety under contemporary international law, the target nation will view interdiction as the hostile act of a foreign military and will be faced with three basic options: capitulate, modify its policies or fight. In situations where the target nation cannot hope to fight militarily, the interdicted government will surely resort to diplomatic, legal and/or economic warfare as appropriate.

Secondly, interdictions rarely concentrate upon the violator's wrongful actions. It is an indirect strategy and usually results in a diplomatic test of stamina. Interdictions do not attack the cause of dispute, and by "poison(ing) the atmosphere" of negotiations, often preclude the use other methods which might be successful.<sup>35</sup>

The difficulty of setting goals for interdiction or measuring its effectiveness is the third rationale which

supports the argument against interdiction. Cultural differences and perceptions between the interdictor and target nation make the selection of interdiction and its measurement difficult.<sup>36</sup> On the international level, "norms of required behavior are ill-defined and uncertain," which exacerbates the problem of selecting the proper goals and measurements for an interdiction operation.<sup>37</sup>

Fourth, the coercive impact of interdiction matures slowly and becomes more effective the longer it is applied.<sup>38</sup> Results will not occur overnight. Therefore, the OC should be prepared for a long operation. But the U.S. public's endorsement of this course of action will fade quickly. Traditionally, Americans will not support long and visibly unproductive military operations. Moreover, this delayed impact gives the target country time to take anticipatory actions to mitigate the effects of the interdiction.<sup>39</sup>

The fifth reason which contravenes the use of interdiction is its limited applicability. Interdictions can only be applied against small, Third World and underdeveloped countries. Large, powerful nations with capable navies and multiple sources of supply are less likely to be coerced by interdiction. In fact, interdiction against a large, industrialized nation risks a quick escalation to war. The inconsistent use of

interdiction against only small countries could undermine U.S. credibility and frustrate foreign policy.<sup>40</sup> Another limitation on the application of interdiction arises when considering totalitarian-type governments. Because a totalitarian leader is not directly responsible to his people, interdictions would probably have less effect upon the target nation's policy-making.<sup>41</sup> In addition, a dictator can control his domestic press to manipulate public opinion against the interdictor and/or to downplay the effects of interdiction.<sup>42</sup> In fact, interdiction may offer a leader an excuse for economic difficulties which have no connection to the interdiction operation. A crafty leader will not only mobilize his internal propaganda machine, but will utilize all available means of persuading world opinion that his country is the target of superpower injustice.<sup>43</sup> Agricultural countries are more self-sufficient at feeding their population and therefore less vulnerable to the effects of interdiction. Ironically, interdiction can actually stimulate some portions of the target nation's economy in promoting self-sufficiency.<sup>44</sup>

Sixth, the long term effects of interdictions may be as diplomatically and economically harmful to the interdictor as to the target nation.<sup>45</sup> Diplomatically, the world may view U.S. interdiction actions as another example of superpower arrogance. Likewise, interdicting



the commerce of a nation which is a major purchaser of U.S. goods could severely damage American businesses.<sup>46</sup>

Similarly, interdictions can burden and strain international relationships and coalitions.<sup>47</sup> Within the growing interdependence of today's world economy, multi-lateral interdiction efforts may prove very difficult to gain universal agreement among coalition partners. Coalition partners whose self-interest is not affected by the target nation's transgressions may desire the most lenient form of interdiction while those nations whose interests are grievously damaged will argue for the most stringent actions.<sup>48</sup> Another anti-coalition factor is that political and economic sentiments are in some instances too irresistible to prevent potential coalition parties from assisting the target nation. Also, not all partners will share equally the burden of implementing interdiction efforts. This will undercut the coalition's esprit de corps.<sup>49</sup> Ultimately, nations find it difficult to rise above their self-interest in order to support a coalition. Small countries can be very single-minded and tend to exert their sovereignty by taking independent action against coalitions. Third world countries may refuse to join interdiction coalitions because they see themselves as legitimate targets for future interdictions, and oftentimes, powerful nations do not find it

advantageous to subordinate their self-interest to the international community.<sup>50</sup>

An eighth consideration which opposes the use of interdiction is the potential reaction of the target nation's population. An interdiction may create intense bitterness and unite a nation against the interdictor.<sup>51</sup> In such situations, governments of nations under interdiction can count on cooperation from all levels within the country in an effort to mitigate the effects of interdiction.<sup>52</sup>

Lastly, interdictions can create vast socio-economic problems within the region surrounding the target nation. Operations which severely deprive humanitarian services could foster world outrage concerning human rights. Interdictions also may cause mass human migrations to neighboring countries.<sup>53</sup>

#### Dynamic Analysis

It is requisite to foresee everything the enemy may do, and be prepared with the necessary means to counteract it.

Napoleon I: Maxims of War, 1812

In the military decision-making process, the OC would normally produce an evaluation of the situation. Within this evaluation, every possible enemy strategy is compared

to each course of action (COA) available to friendly forces.<sup>54</sup> This type of analysis is effective when applied to two quantified battle forces in conflict. But in the context of military forces operating as an peacetime instrument of international diplomacy, the combination of possible COAs and number of potential players is overwhelming. It is sufficient for the purpose of this paper to submit five basic COAs for friendly (Blue) forces and two enemy (Red) COAs. Several obvious but improbable COAs have been eliminated.

In response to a Red policy or act which conflicts with U.S. and/or allied interests, Blue's five basic COAs are non-military economic/diplomatic sanctions, symbolic interdiction, selective interdiction, total interdiction, and covert operations. I will assume that sanctions need no explanation. Symbolic interdiction refers to a very limited use of interdiction for the diplomatic purpose of demonstrating disapproval of a target nation's policies or actions. Selective interdiction is the import/export prohibition of only a selected item. This item could be the target nation's primary cash product, or if the target nation was engaged in conflict, war supplies might be interdicted. The fourth COA for Blue forces is total interdiction. This type of action entails the complete cessation, with exception of humanitarian supplies such as medicine, of the target nation's sea commerce. Covert

operations are secretive actions within the target nation's borders or its suppliers which aggravate and quicken the effects of interdiction. These actions would include destruction of strategic stockpiles, shipping facilities, manufacturing capabilities and/or critical utilities.

In reaction to Blue's initiatives, Red has two basic COAs: resistance with and without outside assistance. Outside assistance refers to the cumulative efforts of the international community (due to various motivations i.e. economic, allied, and humanitarian, etc.) to mollify the effects of U.S. strategy.

Table II represents the interaction of the above seven COAs. Each matrix value is based on a 200 point scale (+100 to -100) and represents a combination of four tests: suitability, feasibility, acceptability and sensitivity. Suitability is the quality of the match of mission to objective and is worth 30 points (+30 is the best match and -30 is the worst). Feasibility determines the capability of the United States to carry out the mission and is weighted at 10 points. Acceptability measures the amount of risk and costs versus the objective, and is assigned a maximum value of 20 points.

Table II

## Dynamic Analysis of Red and Blue COAs

## Red COAs

Blue COAs	Resist W/O Assistance	Resist W/ Assistance	Row of Mins
Non-mil Sanctions	+34	+12	+12
Symbolic Interdict	+49	+7	+7
Selective Interdict	+33	+12	+12
Total Interdict	+28	+13	+13
Covert Operations	+1	-18	-18
Row of Maxs	+49	+13	

Source: Captain R.P. Beebe, "Military Decision from the Viewpoint of Game Theory," Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1957, pp. 13-22.

Sensitivity is the fourth test and is worth 40 points. This test is a compilation of eight major factors of 5 points each derived from the previous For and Against sections of the paper. The sensitivity factors are time, cost, world opinion, U.S. public opinion, harm to U.S./allies, harm to target, socio-economic impact upon the region, and deterrent value. Positive and negative values within the matrix do not indicate favorable and unfavorable outcomes, but represent the probable relationship between outcomes of the interaction of two respective strategies.<sup>55</sup> Values assigned to the four tests are based upon the facts and assumptions of this paper and the writer's judgement and experience.

The OC should select the COA which provides the most favorable condition to Blue, depending upon the most likely COA of Red's response (see Row of Maximums). If the OC believes Red will be unable to obtain substantial regional, coalitional or international support, he would then recommend symbolic interdiction (in addition to sanctions) as the best COA. However, if outside assistance to Red is likely, then the best COA would be total interdiction (in addition to sanctions).

## CHAPTER III

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The world is becoming increasingly complex and ambiguous. The population of the earth and its conflicts are growing at a furious pace. As the major industrial countries continue to invest in and develop the Third World, the national interests of world powers are more likely to clash with those of formative nations. Innovative diplomacy by all means will be necessary (and demanded by the American people) if the United States is to avoid the diplomatic and economic costs of war.

Within this context, this paper has explored the topic of naval interdiction from the ever broadening perspective of the Operational Commander. The purpose of the paper was to examine the viability of naval interdiction as course of action. To this end, the writing considered policy's influence on the mission of interdiction as well as its applicability. Moreover, the arguments for and against interdiction were scrutinized, and finally, a dynamic analysis was conducted to compare the relativity of various types of naval interdiction to other COAs.

From this exercise, the following conclusions and/or recommendations can be formulated:

1. Naval interdiction is a useful diplomatic tool of the United States. Because the United States is the world's greatest seapower, interdiction is a unique weapon which few nations can challenge. Therefore, the advantages and disadvantages of interdiction should be explored in every international situation which has the potential to escalate to war.
2. Because of world trends, naval interdiction will probably be utilized by the United States more in the future than in the past. The fall of the former Soviet Union, the rejection of communism, regionalism, ethnic nationalism and the development of the Third World will create incrementally more opportunities for the use of interdiction.
3. The future Operational Commander and his plan must be keenly attuned to the economic and social impact of interdiction upon the region. These sections of the commander's Estimate of the Situation should be inclusive and fully developed.
4. The mission of interdiction is highly political and the OC must concisely communicate this meaning and its implications to his subordinate commanders and their assigned tasks.



5. The applicability of naval interdiction is limited to situations which exhibit certain definitive characteristics. If the situation is not suited for interdiction, the Operational Commander should, if feasible, object to its implementation. In such instances, coercion can destroy the values which it is intended to protect.<sup>1</sup>

6. Interdiction is an indirect approach to diplomatic problem-solving. Its effects form slowly and are not conducive to quick solutions often desired by American politicians and public. Operational Commanders should ensure a realistic timetable for results is considered at all levels before the selection of interdiction as a COA.

7. Traditional measures of effectiveness for interdiction such as economic and military impact may be improper. Effectiveness must be judged on a case by case basis. Crucial factors are nature of the objective, its value to both the interdictor and target nation, the resources both are willing to commit to and against interdiction, and the target's self-sufficiency and ability to obtain outside assistance.<sup>2</sup> Regardless of which MOE is selected, it is clear that those who argue that interdiction has no effect are wrong.<sup>3</sup>

8. The effectiveness of interdiction increases significantly when combined with other forms of diplomatic coercion. Naval interdiction, except when conducted for

symbolic purposes, imparts tremendous political, economic and psychological influence when supplemented by diplomatic and economic sanctions.

### Summary

Regardless of preference, naval interdiction appears to be a viable but limited option for the foreseeable future. Applied appropriately, emphatically and with due consideration, interdiction can produce sufficient coercive power to persuade another government to arrest an offensive policy or activity. But within the dynamics of American public opinion and governmental processes, interdiction will continue to present to our leaders an irresistible last step before committing the United States to combat. The concept of interdiction satisfies so many morally and politically controversial issues for American politicians that it remains difficult to imagine a situation which would not tempt its employment. Hence, in my opinion, interdiction will be unsuitably applied more often than not in the future. Therefore, the U.S. Navy must ultimately be fully prepared to initiate a naval interdiction operation on short notice anywhere in the world. In 1605, Cervantes wrote "The man who is prepared

has his battle half fought."4 It is the other half of the battle about which this officer is concerned.

## NOTES

### Abstract

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### Chapter I

1. James Cable, Gunboat Diplomacy 1919-1979 (London: The Macmillan Press, LTD., 1981), p. 11.
2. Ibid., pp. 11-15.
3. James Cable, "Gunboat Diplomacy's Future," Proceedings, August 1986, p. 41.
4. Cable, Gunboat Diplomacy 1919-1979, p. 38.
5. Ibid.
6. C. Lloyd Brown-John, Multilateral Sanctions in International Law (London: Praeger Publishers, 1975), p. 1.
7. Cable, Gunboat Diplomacy 1919-1979, p. 110.
8. Richard J. Ellings, Embargoes and World Power (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1985), p. 15.
9. The White House, National Security Strategy of the United States, (Washington: 1990), p. 6.
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12. Brown-John, p. 31-36.

### Chapter II

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2. Captain Wayne Hughes, Jr. USN (Ret.), Fleet Tactics (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986), p. 217.
3. C. Lloyd Brown-John, Multilateral Sanctions in International Law (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), p. 34.
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14. Ibid., pp. 168-169.
15. Ibid., p. 18.
16. Ibid., p. 27.
17. Ibid., p. 161.
18. Ibid., p. 163.
19. Ibid., p. 51.

20. Ibid., p. 161.
21. Ibid., p. 43.
22. Ibid., pp. 26-27.
23. Ibid., p. 51.
24. Ibid., p. 18.
25. Ibid., p. 161.
26. Ibid., p. 18.
27. Ibid., p. 27.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., p. 51.
30. Doxey, p. 125.
31. Daoudi and Dajani, p. 161.
32. Doxey, p. 90.
33. Daoudi and Dajani, pp. 43-47.
34. Ibid., p. 30.
35. Ibid., p. 165.
36. Doxey, pp. 80-83.
37. Ibid., p. 126.
38. Daoudi and Dajani, p. 164.
39. Doxey, p. 106.
40. Daoudi and Dajani, p. 30.
41. Ibid., p. 27.
42. Richard J. Ellings, Embargoes and World Power (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1985), p. 12.
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47. Daoudi and Dajani, pp. 29 and 157.
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